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EDUCATION AND THE VICTORIAN MIND OF ENGLAND.

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THE RELATION OF THE ATTITUDES OF LEADING PUBLIC MEN IN BRITAIN CONCERNING LARGE-SCALE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO THE GENERAL PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE IN THE VICTORIAN PERIOD WAS STUDIED. THE EDUCATIONAL IDEOLOGIES OF BENJAMIN DISRAELI, WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE, LORD JOHN RUSSELL, AND WILLIAM LOVETT WERE ASCERTAINED. ADULT EDUCATION IN 19TH-CENTURY BRITAIN WAS EXAMINED WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY EXPOUNDED IN AND BY LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETIES, MECHANICS INSTITUTES, LYCEUMS, WORKING MEN'S COLLEGES, SETTLEMENT HOUSES, AND PUBLISHING VENTURES. THE PROCEDURES USED WERE TO EXAMINE PRIVATE PAPERS, PUBLISHED WORKS, GOVERNMENT REPORTS, BIOGRAPHIES, AND MONOGRAPHS. THE RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS WERE PRESENTED IN DETAIL. THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN FOSTERING A COHESIVE SOCIETY WAS EMPHASIZED. (TC)

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BACKGROUND

There is a vital necessity to relate attitudes of leading public men of Britain concerning large scale educational opportunity to the general philosophy of life of the Victorian period. How did educational change fit into the pattern of liberalization of the political and social structure? What was the relationship of adult education to the political and social philosophy of the times? What was it conditioned by, and what role was it expected to perform?

OBJECTIVES

1. To ascertain the educational ideology of Benjamin Disraeli, William E. Gladstone, Lord John Russell and William Lovett.
2. To examine adult education in 19th century Britain with specific reference to the social philosophy expounded in and by
   a) Literary and Philosophical Societies
   b) Mechanics Institutes
   c) Lyceums
   d) Working Men's Colleges
   e) Settlement Houses
   f) Publishing ventures

PROCEDURE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

In part one the private papers of Gladstone, Disraeli, Russell, were studied as well as the Place papers which contain Lovett letters, the published works of all four men, Hansard, and official Government reports (Accounts and Papers) and relative biographies and monographsconnected to educational development and the careers and colleagues of the men under consideration. In part two the material analyzed included specialized reports and publications of the various adult education agencies under consideration, the private papers of Lord Brougham as well as published material by the leaders in adult education, such as F. D. Maurice, Barnett,of Toynbee Hall,

and also the supporters of educational centers for the mature. The publishing ventures which were dedicated to adult education were investigated as well as significant elements of the periodical press. Of course. Monographs on educational development of the century were consulted as a necessary foundation for the specialized research.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The educational ideology of Benjamin Disraeli, William Gladstone and Lord John Russell revealed most clearly that the British politician of the nineteenth century with responsibilities of leadership considered education for the general population as a necessary corollary to the religious life of the nation. Disraeli and Gladstone hoped to place general education for youth within the institutional framework, and indeed directed by the clergy of the Established Church. Both men conceived of such an educational pattern as first and foremost providing citizens with a code of life which was related to the development of personal character and public responsibilities. They believed that doctrinal instruction was vital in the achievement of that goal and that religion had to permeate the curriculum and not be a mere addendum. The two political leaders considered that the Church in control of education kept the mechanistic and secular forces of Government from intruding into the human spirit and destroying the heritage of freedom passed from one generation to another by various institutions. Both men therefore saw religion and education as partners in the maintenance of national values and an attitude of mind which transcended obedience to the dictates of Government. In an age of change, i.e., the political base of the country broadened, the Government undertook an enlarged role in society, the economy became more and more oriented to impersonal forces, Disraeli and Gladstone sought to achieve stability for the citizen by giving him through religion and education an acceptance of order, legal procedure, and the distinctive national social structure which was becoming more flexible.

Lord John Russell, although a member of the Established Church was an insistent and diligent spokesman for the Non Conformist position. The Dissenters reached toward full citizenship and equal standing on all matters with Anglicans, and they wished a national educational system to be based on equality. Russell's ideal was a comprehensive educational system which gave to all students Christian instruction of a non doctrinal type, and allowed specialized instruction for those children who wished it. He also believed in preservation of traditional English values by education and religion, but he judged it could best be accomplished by the creation of a common system which drew upon the heterogeneous religious pattern of English life. Thus in one sense the Dissenters looked upon education as a bastion which had to fall to them in order to become not mere participators but shapers of the life and outlook of the English working class community that moved toward full participation in the nation's political life. In 1839 Russell submitted his plan to build a joint religious educational system but failed to gain acceptance of it. The ensuing generation was marked on one hand by the efforts of Russell and his confreres such as Lord Lansdowne to protect the voluntary but widespread Non Conformist elementary educational system by assuring it adequate financial aid from annual Parliamentary grants, and on the other hand to move toward some sort of a comprehensive national system even if on a piecemeal basis.

For their part, Disraeli and Gladstone were forced to come to terms with the educational demands of the Non Conformists but they struggled to maintain for the Established Church a primacy of financial support, if not exclusive support. They, as did Russell, had to face the problem of drawing together in a workable educational relationship historic religious forces marked by centuries of rivalry which had arrived at a modus vivendi but not complete amicability on the issue of their future relationship with the working classes which in many cases had not committed themselves to a religious organization. The Established Church, Disreali, and Gladstone considered education as the

prime instrument to bring back the lethargic but not aliented lower classes to a full communion. They concluded that the Church was in a stage of revival. Gladstone held to that position in the thirties and forties but had his belief shaken by the opening of the fifth decade of the century. Disraeli who procrastinated about a national system in the sixties judged that delay was advantageous to the Church since it was extending its sway among the masses.

Lord Russell saw the multiplicity of Protestant experiences as responsible for the achievement of some of the previous civil rights and independent qualities of mind and heart of Englishmen, and therefore any national educational system based upon that mindset as the force to extend and make permanent a broadening and enriching of national life which had been going on since the Reformation. Both Dissenters and advocates of the Established Church in the field of education were not able to parry and thrust in the game of forging a national system with complete freedom because in any impasse a common enemy secular education advocates had arisen in the mid century generation who were ready to take advantage of conditions.

But beyond the aforementioned problem the necessity for a national system which touched every child was only slowly accepted by the three public leaders. A complete national system touched upon controversial, philosophical points which involved areas other than education. Public men were undecided about the responsibilities of the Government, private agencies, and the individual to create, extend, or maintain patterns of community life. Statism, loss of individualism, and destruction of private initiative came to the fore, and political leaders feared that in correcting evils they opened up in the process new and more terrifying areas. Despite the lack of widespread educational opportunities for the lower classes, English public men on the whole considered that Englishmen had been able to maintain collectively if not individually a political integrity and cohesiveness. And the potential of education as a force for either good or evil they fully realized. There is no question but

that the three political leaders believed that the burden of any educational system rested first of all upon the individual and private agencies, and the state performed a supplementary role, and yet the state's role expanded each year. As a result they endeavored in a variety of ways to tolerate its expanded financial role but cushion its supervisory role by maintaining in a sturdy condition private agencies as a channel for funds, and also give local units custodial and operational power. Not only rivalry among the religious groups then drove public men to lean heavily upon private agencies in an expanding education system but ideological fears of "statism" in a society which due to its economy, increase in population, and religious diversity moved relentlessly toward secular solutions.

These three political leaders were also concerned with making education for the comfortable classes responsive to the needs of the nineteenth century. Disraeli as a novelist prior to his period of political prominence advocated a flexible educational system for his fictional youths of material affluence. He wanted a broad based curriculum of modern languages, literature, and history as well as the classics. The formal education acquired at schools and universities was, he believed, only a limited part of intellectual enlargement which came to a great degree by informal learning and self direction. Yet as a political leader of the Conservative Party, with strong ties to the Established Church, he gave endorsement to that institution's place in the Universities as well as in any projected national elementary educational system. As a novelist and as a politician, he made it plain that universities were not in his opinion the heart of the nation; intelligent political life in Parliament and public service seemed to him more vital to develop and maintain the nation's charter of liberty and progress. Disraeli's interest in education for the comfortable classes was in accord with his belief stated in <u>What is he?</u> that the salvation of the country rested in great public leadership. He desired an educational system which cultivated the inquiring mind, and yet he

felt it was requisite to maintain an institutional integrity within which the enlightened man worked. In the wake of the Industrial Exhibit of 1851 he offered a resolution for Government financial support of a science museum and science activities center at Kensington Gore. He informed Parliament that the industrial education of the country had to be closely studied, and the influence of science and art brought to bear to a greater degree on industrial life. In 1867 he again called for more attention to technical education which had languished after the initial interest in the early fifties. Yet the Conservative Government of which he was a part moved in a very limited manner to support technical education. A small scholarship program was authorized by the Duke of Marlborough. The Memorandum of Suggestions for Enlarging the System of State Aid to Scientific Instruction presented by Captain Donnelly, Inspector of Science, which had the concurrence of the Disraeli Government rejected large scale Government aid to technical schools, and placed the responsibilities upon local authorities and private agencies. The Parliamentary Select Committee appointed in March, 1868, came to the same conclusion. The secondary schools and universities were, however, urged to give greater attention to science. And so Victorian political leadership had decided that attention needed primarily to be given to the scientific educational needs of the management class.

Lord Russell in regard to higher education desired to make the universities of Oxford and Cambridge national universities without religious restrictions, and he supported the foundation of London University as a learning avenue for non adherents of the Established Church. He insisted that merit, industry, and ability had to have their due recognition at the ancient universities. He was concerned about making endowments perform a more vital and constructive function in university finances, the faculty play a larger role in university government as well as receive more just financial rewards, and a greater proportion of funds devoted to instructional purposes. Lastly he wanted to extend and liberalize university life by a broader recruitment of instructors

and a more flexible admissions policy which did not make acceptance by a college a sine qua non for matriculation. He warmly indorsed Disraeli's project for Government assistance to a national science center in London. And in the late sixties he joined with other Liberals and academicians at a conference on technical education at Manchester. He announced there that he had been heartened by the inclusion of science courses at Harrow, but also disappointed that they were only optional. At Oxford also he approved of the inclusion of eminent scientists to the faculty but felt not enough rewards in terms of fellowships were given to science students.

He gave unqualified endorsement to all sorts of adult education programs. At the Bedford Literary and Scientific Society and the Bristol Athenaeum in 1854 he announced that research into any area of science, literature, politics, strengthened the state and increased devotion to religion. He feared that leisure and wealth in a nation foreshadowed decay unless mental acumen was kept alive.

Russell designated educational development and reform as an inseparable part of political and social changes and made possible their successes. But at the same time Russell stated a Victorian belief that education for the masses had to be formed so as to harmonize and unify society. Thus any national plan had to take into account special and indeed unique social and political traditions, and special interests. Education had to accommodate itself philosophically and in machinery to a complex society. Russell's desire for change and forward movement at times competed with his dedication to reconciliation and harmony of purpose which he held to be requisite for a viable educational settlement.

Gladstone's views of education for the comfortable classes were complex. He stood firm for the universities of Oxford and Cambridge as the intellectual agencies of the Established Church, and throughout his career sought to retain as much power for the Church in the Universities as was feasible. In the early

fifties he warned the Church not to cling to peripheral areas of control and in so doing face the loss of major areas. Above all he worked to maintain their independence from direct parliamentary supervision. But Gladstone also was concerned about making the universities responsive to the needs of his own age. He asked that a larger number of lower and middle class youths be admitted to the universities. In 1858 at the Social Science Congress he stated his belief that they had responded to the needs of the middle class. The Oxford middle class examination seemed specific validation of his claim. He saw no incompatibility between commerce and industry and the classical academic world. The universities he hoped would provide opportunities for higher education to the youth of the industrial cities. He looked toward the university extension of the seventies. In 1864 at the distribution of Oxford Examination prizes in Manchester, he rejoiced at the mergence of the middle class and upper classes in the universities, and he felt it enriched both. He did not wish to replace the old order but bring to the middle class the humanizing influence of the rich heritage of ancient academic life which involved fraternal relationships and a deepening of spiritual values.

William Lovett holds a somewhat unique place in this particular study of educational views of English public men. Lovett never held public office. However by leadership in the Chartist movement he represented an important segment of English public thought. Moreover he symbolized the accommodation of an energetic part of the working class leadership to the values and leaders of moderate political reform. Education in Lovett's philosophy was a critical ingredient both in the advancement of the working classes and in their acceptance of the English social, political, and intellectual heritage which he felt was the cherished possession of the workingmen as well as the comfortable classes. He demanded for the workers full political rights as contained in the Chartist program. But in addition he urged workers to undertake education of all sorts and cultivate the moral attributes of the responsible classes above them, moral

sobriety, honesty, civic responsibility, diligence, attention to occupational duties, and economic independence achieved by a judicious savings program to care for onesself in old age and illness. He indicted the narrowly based and socially exclusive legislature, but at the same time assured the entrenched orders that the Working Men's Association in which he was a prime mover desired to render property more secure, and preserve inviolate every institution which could be made to contribute to the happiness of man. The Association was designed to encourage a moral stamina among workers. He envisaged an elite of virtuous workers who would be able to lead their fellows into positive programs of reform of self and society. The people had to become their own social and political regenerators was his cry from 1840 to 1860. Changes in Government had to be accompanied by changes in self. Virtue even in poverty was the prime requisite to Lovett. Indeed, he became a teacher and opened a school heavily supported by William Ellis at the National Hall,High Holborn, London. Lovett moved to an acceptable relationship and even alliance with the progressive elements of the middle class, and his education efforts were supported by Lord Brougham, J. S. Mill and about twenty Radical members of Parliament. Literature and philosophy was in his view valuable in elevation of society, and the establishment of social cohesion. Individual responsibility in citizenship was accompanied by an insistence that a national educational system remain in the hands of local communities. He in effect suggested a Parliamentary act empowering national education for all but administered in local educational districtsand supported by local taxation. His educational plans were wide in scope. National Halls in every locality, he conceived of as centers for regular education for children and youth, but also as adult education centers which offered rational amusements of all sorts. Gardens, playgrounds, parks were, he considered, appropriate parts of the educational complex in each district.

The adult education quest in the nineteenth century England had clear political and social implications and objectives. The large number of Literary

and Philosophical Societies formed in the generation after the defeat of Napoleon drew into a study of science, literature a cross section of the comfortable classes in every region of the country. Members of the aristocracy, successful professional men, clergy, politicians,and businessmen supported these associations. Lectures, discussions and collections of all sorts were gathered in special buildings either specially erected or purchased. These men created a flexible. social pattern of merit and wealth in each area and contributed to belief in the efficacy of education to refine, elevate,and enlarge viewpoints. Men from the Literary and Philosophical Societies were oftentimes patrons and guides of the plebian educational centers which began to appear in the mid twenties.

The mechanics institutes which were designed for workers but quickly found greater favor among the lower middle class were conceived of as science centers in the first instance. The hope was present that workers would devote themselves to the science areas which were directly related to their economic improvement and the furtherance of the national industrial complex. Science was defined as having, however, an entertainment and moral value as well as an economic one. The influx of the middle class men into adult centers who were not heavily science oriented moved the offerings into the humanities and sometimes simply entertaining lectures on various subjects. However, the supporters of education for the working men such as Brougham and industrialists like the Heywards, Gregs, and Akroyds were vitally interested in the social and political purposes of education, and in order to bring workers to education they broadened the education to include the humanities and entertainment courses. These men sought above all the stable community and responsible citizens. The lyceum movement in the Lancashire region in the thirties proposed to give working class men the social habits and pleasures of the comfortable classes. The lyceums and broadened mechanics institute movement were closely associated by patrons with savings bank p rograms, friendly societies and a variety

of self help activities. The pursuit of knowledge and the habits which it entailed as well as the replacement of habits of vice by attendance at entertaining educational programs loomed as large as the actual attainment of specific information or ideas. Workers were presented with the guidelines of British society, and a process of reconciliation between workers and comfortable members of society marked out. Workers were presented with the ideas and heritage of the nation as interpreted by the Establishment, and they saw a corps of men of prosperous circumstances undertake a variety of projects to improve the material lot of the worker.

The adult education movement was ideologically supported by the Benthamites which made political changes dependent upon educational development and brought the Radicals to a stirring affirmation of adult improvement. A non doctrinaire group which might be designated the Holland House Circle consisted of a large number of Whig reformers, like Russell, Lansdowne, who saw adult education as supplementary to an expanded elementary system and a university system which was necessary in order to achieve eventual political enfranchisement of the workers.

The industrial worker was presented with what may be called the James Watt concept which has certain sililarities to the later American fictional success ideology of Horatio Alger. Englishmen were told that they lived in an oepn society, and by self education, particularly in the field of science they were able to achieve material affluence, contribute to national economic strength, and find pleasure. James Watt the inventor of the industrial steam engine seemed in the generation after the defeat of Napoleon to symbolize England's industrial supremacy. He had pursued a self education program and rose from humble beginnings. He was, of course, merely one of a significant number of similar inventors and industrial pioneers who were referred to by speakers throughout the nation as fitting models for workers to emulate.

An important ingredient of adult education was unofficial education or non institutional obtained by publishing programs. The Society for the Diffusion

of Useful Knowledge was the most active organization. Formed in the mid twenties its stalwart supporters were progressives, Whigs, Lord Brougham, Russell, Lenman, Benthamites, Radicals,and academicians. It endeavored to meet the varied educational needs of the working classes by giving them information about their many occupations, domestic areas of life, political guidance, encouragement to expand the regular system of education, sympathy and understanding of English cultural accomplishments, and finally rational amusement. This program was carried forward by means of several series in science, biography, history, literature, and the like. The Penny Magazine was its major periodical venture which reached a circulation of 200,000. It contained material popular in polite society, literary pieces, travel accounts, engravings of works of art and famous places and buildings. Lord Brougham, the chief promoter, conceived of it as a way to create amicable feelings in society. It also propagated subtly an ideology. It stressed the need for social solidarity and the industrial organization of the nation received favorable treatment. In short Britain's industrial machine was the salvation of the English worker. The possibility of rising in the economic sphere of life received considerable attention as did the better utilization of the worker's material resources. The Magazine nevertheless stressed the need for wealthy members of society to provide workers with opportunities for education and healthful relaxation in the open air. It carried on a campaign for expansion of education at all levels. The Society also published special volumes which developed in detail the aforegoing themes. The Working Man's Companion (1830), Craik's The Pursuit of Knowledge Under Difficulties, and A. Ure's The Philosophy of Manufactures. The Chambers brothers also carried on a similar program in such ventures as Chambers' Journal, Information for the People, Chambers' Historical Newspaper, and Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Tracts. A great variety of scientific and literary collections, encyclopedias, and miscellanies, poured from British presses in the late twenties and the following decades. By the forties a number of periodicals

directed to the working classes appeared which encouraged salf development, but demanded in a more pointed way specific reforms, and these periodicals were conducted by members of the comfortable classes who had established friendly personal associations with Chartists and working class leaders. Representative of this ideology was The People's Journal.

The Working Men's Colleges of the fifties were a part of the new confidence of the working classes. J.F.D. Maurice and his confreres at the London Working Men's College set the tone of the new movement. Maurice did not merely stress the cooperation of the educated and the materially comfortable in gaining educational opportunities for the working classes as had been the situation earlier in the century. He called for brotherhood among classes in the actual operation of the educational process. Moreover he informed the workers that they gave something to the educated man in the exchange. They were therefore not simply passive receivers. He emphasized their practical approach to learning which was necessary. However, he asked that the worker embark upon learning not for utilitarian and economic purposes; he advised programs in the liberal arts so as to deepen their understanding of life and the possibilities of intellectual pleasure. He told the workers that they were custodians of the nation's intellectual and cultural historical storehouse as well as university men. But beyond that he ascribed to the dignity of the manual laborer and urged the worker not to attempt to rise out of his class, but to elevate himself as a moral and learned being, and thereby improve his personal stature and that of his fellow workers. Maurice presented the university man in an attractive guise and also the traditional organization of English education. He did not challenge the leadership of the educated classes if it were based upon service and sympathy with the aspirations of the working classes. He accepted also the industrial society marked by railways and factories as gifts of God as much as Gothic cathedrals.

Henry Solly put into a new context the theme of education for rational amusement. He in effect carried on the lyceum movement of the thirties in a new form. The Club and Institute Union (1862) which he sponsored received the full backing of the varied educational movements, new and old,and the leaders in the field; i.e. James Hole and the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics Institutes, labor union leaders, the Christian Socialists, wealthy industrialists long involved in adult education, and young and old politicians associated with educational advance. The importance of education for rational amusement had wide acceptance. The Clubs were set up as social centers, and not formal educational establishments.

Solly envisaged them as competitors of public houses. He hoped they would become meeting places for various classes which was not realized to any extent. Also Solly hoped to draw to the Clubs the lowest strata of society which the Working Men's Colleges had not tapped. He was not successful in any large measure in achieving that goal and ascribed it to the fact that wealthy patrons of Clubs were not interested in penetrating the worst slum areas, and the inhabitants of those areas could not carry forward the project due to lack of funds as well as inclination. Solly tied the Clubs to rehabilitation and to programs in local areas of eliminating excessive drinking and suppression of vicious publications. He favored drawing to the Clubs, friendly societies and trade societies.

Solly also sponsored the formal educational experiment, the Trade Guilds of Learning (1873) which was a projected league of trade unions which offered both liberal and technical courses. He established his own Artisans" Institute for Promoting General and Technical Education.

Education through the agency of the Settlement Houses followed somewhat in the path of the Club and Institute Union. The Settlements propounded the ideal of reputable courses combined with social and convivial projects. The directors held to the validity of corporate action in the nineteenth century,

but also supported the necessity of individualism of the mind and the spirit. The Settlements faced the problem of arriving at an acceptable fusion of intellectual self dependence and personal intellectual growth not related to economic goals together with the acceptance of the protective shield of the Government to achieve material security. Canon Barnett of Toynbee Hall set the groundwork with his statement of belief; a population in a state of poverty was unable to become knowledgeable. Accordingly he advocated Government action to secure adequate housing, medical care, old age pensions and a complete system of education. He desired to avoid the mechanistic approach to life in such programs by involving university men in personal association with workers in organizations such as Settlement Houses. Higher education, music, art and religion were fruitless, he said, unless they came clothed in the spirit of a brother man. But in truth Barnett saw the Settlement primarily as clubs of men of diverse creeds who worked to satisfy the spiritual and material needs of a particular district. And the various Settlements although offering courses, some affiliated with the University Extension Service, moved in the path designated by the director of Toynbee Hall. A number of Settlement men identified themselves with the material aspirations of the working class and gave sympathy and advise to men involved in industrial problems and turmoil. The Settlement leaders, however, announced that reformation of the individual and his dedication to self education was not a panacea. They insisted that the Government had to establish positive material conditions. Education they believed did not automatically produce the good life but rather the good life had to accompany successful educational advance. The Settlement they believed was the proper agency to uncover the problems of an area, present the profile of distress, and suggest remedies. Moreover the Settlements had the duty to teach the rights of labor, basic political and economic principles to workers and guide them in formation of all sorts of social service agencies. Percy Alden of the Christian Socialist Brotherhood claimed that as the state progressed

along collectivist lines the individual was not lost, but stood out more clearly. He considered it possible for men to administer "grandmotherly legislation" so that it did not crush the independent spirit. Will Reason of like mind denounced the idea that those who went to the wall were in any way inferior to those who prospered. He said that an assured position in the material world did not await the diligent and sober in society, and asked for a devotion to the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount rather than the gospel of Samuel Smiles. In truth, the Settlement House leadership proclaimed that individual reformation of morals and acquisition of knowledge was not a panacea but just one part of an improvement regimen for the workingman. These leaders placed the burden upon the local community and national Government to establish positive material conditions. Yet they still maintained that the wealthy and educated segments of the nation were equipped to lead in the suggested reconstruction. They, furthermore, stressed the spiritual nature of men and the necessity for social brotherhood.

All in all adult education played a formidable role in the nineteenth century in fostering a cohesive society. In that sense it performed a function that evangelical religion had in the latter half of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century.